

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5447

To authorize the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum in Ashland, Nebraska, to be referred to as “America’s National Museum of the Cold War”, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

Mr. FORTENBERRY (for himself and Mr. BACON) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To authorize the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum in Ashland, Nebraska, to be referred to as “America’s National Museum of the Cold War”, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “America’s National
5 Museum of the Cold World War Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The Strategic Air Command and Aerospace
2 Museum, a nonprofit corporation under section
3 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986,
4 was established “to preserve the history of Strategic
5 Air Command, the Cold War, and related aerospace
6 artifacts and to inspire learning through imagina-
7 tive, innovative, and inspirational educational pro-
8 grams and exhibits”.

9 (2) The Strategic Air Command and Aerospace
10 Museum is responsible for the finances and manage-
11 ment of the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace
12 Museum in Ashland, Nebraska.

13 (3) The Strategic Air Command and Aerospace
14 Museum is the only large, professionally managed
15 and staffed, and highly visited museum in the
16 United States that exists for the exclusive purpose
17 of interpreting, in totality and depth, the American
18 experience of the Cold War years (1946–1991), in
19 all theaters of conflict and containment, including all
20 branches of the Armed Forces and Intelligence Serv-
21 ices.

22 (4) The Strategic Air Command and Aerospace
23 Museum was founded by community-invested people
24 seeking to preserve the unique history of Strategic
25 Air Command and the influential impact Offutt Air

1 Force Base has had on the history of the United
2 States.

3 (5) From General Curtis LeMay to Strategic
4 Nuclear Deterrence, the Nuclear Triad, Looking
5 Glass, and the fall of the U.S.S.R., the Cold War
6 flowed through the base located in Bellevue, Ne-
7 braska.

8 (6) The current museum is a legacy of the his-
9 tory of Offutt Air Force Base, where President
10 George W. Bush landed on 9/11 as Commander-in-
11 Chief.

12 (7) The Strategic Air Command and Aerospace
13 Museum is the steward of—

14 (A) a significant collection of Cold War
15 aircraft on loan from the United States Air
16 Force that includes, among many others, one of
17 two remaining XF-85 Goblins, one of two re-
18 maining B1-A's, one of four remaining B-36
19 Peacemakers, the first operational B-52, both
20 an SR-71 and U-2, a record-breaking B-58
21 Hustler, an EC-135 Looking Glass, an F-105
22 Thunderchief with a confirmed MiG kill, and
23 the very last RB-45C in existence;

24 (B) one of only three Royal Air Force Avro
25 Vulcans in the United States;

1 (C) the first Apollo Crew Service Module
2 launched into space;

3 (D) the personal effects of Francis Gary
4 Powers, Sr., on loan from his family;

5 (E) a large collection of personal and pro-
6 fessional items of General Curtis LeMay,
7 CINCSAC;

8 (F) thousands of Cold War artifacts, in-
9 cluding missiles and missile firing and com-
10 mand controls;

11 (G) Space Race artifacts from Mercury
12 through Apollo; and

13 (H) Cold War surveillance systems.

14 (8) The Strategic Air Command and Aerospace
15 Museum is home to the B-47 Association Collection
16 and has access to the SR-71 Association Collection.

17 (9) Since the grand opening of the Strategic
18 Air Command and Aerospace Museum, the museum
19 has attracted nearly 3,000,000 visitors from around
20 the world, of which the largest percentage are
21 United States citizens from across the Nation.

22 (10) There is an urgent need to preserve the
23 stories, artifacts, and heroic achievements of the
24 post-World War II era that saw the emergence of
25 the United States as the sole superpower before the

1 proliferation of nuclear weapons that led to Strategic
2 Nuclear Deterrence and Containment of Com-
3 munism, eventually ending in the collapse of the So-
4 viet Union.

5 (11) The United States has a need to forever
6 preserve the knowledge and history of its most im-
7 portant post-World War II responsibility of the 20th
8 century, and to teach that history to citizens, visi-
9 tors, and school children for centuries to come.

10 (12) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
11 space Museum has not sought congressional funding
12 for its facility and operations.

13 (13) Thousands of donors across the Nation
14 have contributed millions of dollars to help build this
15 national institution, including individuals and foun-
16 dations.

17 (14) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
18 space Museum should always be the Nation's mu-
19 seum of the American experience in the Cold War
20 years (1946–1991) where people go to learn about
21 this critical period and where the history of the Na-
22 tion's monumental post-World War II responsibility
23 will be preserved so that future generations may un-
24 derstand the role the United States played in the

1 preservation and advancement of democracy and
2 freedom in the second half of the 20th century.

3 (15) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
4 space Museum seeks to educate a diverse group of
5 audiences through its collection of artifacts, photo-
6 graphs, letters, documents, and firsthand personal
7 accounts of the participants in the Cold War on the
8 home front during one of history's darkest hours.

9 (16) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
10 space Museum is devoted to the combat experience
11 of the Nation's citizen soldiers in all theaters of op-
12 eration and to the heroic efforts of the men and
13 women domestically who supported the overt and
14 covert operations from the period beginning in 1946
15 and ending in 1991.

16 (17) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
17 space Museum continues to add to and maintain one
18 of the Nation's largest personal history collections of
19 the men and women who participated in the Cold
20 War.

21 (18) No other museum seeks to describe, in
22 such totality and depth, the span of time from the
23 era of George F. Kennan to the collapse of the
24 U.S.S.R. and the Cold War's influence on pop cul-

1 ture, geopolitics, and its eventual influence on con-
2 temporary history.

3 (19) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
4 space Museum is currently a 300,000-square-foot in-
5 stitution, including core exhibitions on the Cold War,
6 Strategic Air Command, and Strategic Nuclear De-
7 terrence.

8 (20) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
9 space Museum is planning an expansion that will in-
10 clude a Missileers Hall and a large exhibition dedi-
11 cated to the men and women that served in the Cold
12 War years and their families.

13 (21) The planned Comprehensive Facility Rede-
14 velopment Plan will describe the role played by every
15 State and territory during the Cold War years, and
16 the database of the Strategic Air Command and
17 Aerospace Museum's exhibition program will be
18 made available to the teachers and school children of
19 every State and territory.

20 (22) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
21 space Museum is an official Smithsonian affiliate in-
22 stitution with formal agreement to borrow Smithso-
23 nian artifacts for future exhibitions.

24 (23) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
25 space Museum actively engages with other institu-

1 tions and museums on the history of the Cold War
2 including the National Cryptologic Museum, the Na-
3 tional Reconnaissance Center for Interpretation,
4 NASA Space Centers, and USAF Museum Program,
5 among others.

6 (24) As the Strategic Air Command's motto
7 was "Peace is our Profession", and the heraldry of
8 the organization includes a Mailed Fist offering both
9 Olive Branches and Thunderbolts, with the former
10 headquarters and two major bases within a 50-mile
11 radius.

12 (25) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
13 space Museum supports opportunities for ethical dis-
14 cussion of both nuclear and anti-nuclear defense pol-
15 icy within the context of the Cold War; as the literal
16 and figurative epicenter or "ground zero" for an
17 intercontinental thermonuclear exchange, the area
18 represents our national tradition of free speech that
19 simultaneously embraces both public support and
20 protests.

21 (26) As the Cold War did not "end" but was
22 "won", it is proper and fitting that the Strategic Air
23 Command and Aerospace Museum, generally located
24 near the geographical center of our great Republic
25 in the breadbasket of the Nation, represents the cul-

1 tural, regional, and strategic geopolitical intersec-
2 tions relevant to the history of the Cold War.

3 (27) The 1992 stand-down of the Strategic Air
4 Command represented an awareness of the winning
5 of the Cold War and transition to a changed inter-
6 national leadership role.

7 (28) Academics and academic institutions have
8 engaged the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace
9 Museum favorably for research and advanced degree
10 seminars regarding the Cuban Missile Crisis, Gen-
11 eral Curtis E. LeMay, the evolution of aerospace,
12 and the Cold War, including—

13 (A) the United States Army School of Ad-
14 vanced Military Studies at Fort Leavenworth,
15 Kansas;

16 (B) Sandia National Laboratories; and

17 (C) Dr. James Blight and Dr. Janet Lang
18 of the Balsillie School of International Affairs
19 (policy advisors to governmental administra-
20 tions and the United Nations).

21 (29) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
22 space Museum collaborates with other museums to
23 share the current story of STRATCOM, Minuteman
24 Missileers, The Cold War, the Post-Cold War nature
25 of the Nation's thermonuclear force, and NASA's

1 technological and human developments that resulted
2 in both winning the Cold War and a sense of na-
3 tional pride in achievements.

4 (30) The museum highlights that early on, the
5 United States Army Air Corps and then the United
6 States Air Force developed a culture of diversity, in-
7 cluding—

8 (A) the Tuskegee Airmen (opened by the
9 local chapter president, with a national organi-
10 zation vice-president and the last surviving
11 Tuskegee Airman in the community);

12 (B) Women in Aerospace (featuring his-
13 toric and contemporary accomplishments in the
14 field);

15 (C) the Black Holes Smithsonian Exhibit
16 (featuring the work of seven student interns of
17 color);

18 (D) Strategic Air Command leading the
19 United States Air Force as the first fully inte-
20 grated military branch; and

21 (E) education involvement with community
22 partners in underserved communities.

23 (31) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
24 space Museum is actively collecting oral histories
25 from the Cold War years (1946–1991) to include all

1 branches of service and civilians (Alert Forces,
2 Missileers, children of Vietnam POWs, Civil De-
3 fense, Linebacker II Crew Members, etc.).

4 (32) The Strategic Air Command and Aero-
5 space Museum holds a large collection of archival
6 film and video from the Cold War years (1946–
7 1991) that include interviews with General Curtis
8 LeMay and other commanders in chief of the Stra-
9 tegic Air Command, SAC training and promotional
10 films, SAC Cold War status reports, Civil Defense
11 training, Missile Security, and Cold War Propa-
12 ganda.

13 (33) It is fitting and proper to refer to the
14 Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum as
15 “America’s National Museum of the Cold War”.

16 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

17 It is the sense of Congress that the following goals
18 are worthwhile and should be sustained through America’s
19 National Museum of the Cold War:

20 (1) Ensuring the continuing preservation, main-
21 tenance, and interpretation of the artifacts, docu-
22 ments, images, and history collected by the museum.

23 (2) Enhancing the knowledge of the American
24 people of the American experience during the Cold

1 War years, in combat, surveillance, intelligence,
2 counter-intelligence and on the home front.

3 (3) Providing and supporting a facility for the
4 public display of the artifacts, photographs, letters,
5 documents, and personal histories of the Cold War
6 years (1946–1991).

7 (4) Providing and supporting a facility for the
8 public display of the artifacts, photographs, letters,
9 documents, and personal histories of the Concept
10 and Theory of Cold Wars, past, present, and future.

11 (5) Providing educational outreach programs
12 for teachers and students throughout the Nation.

13 (6) Encouraging, for educational purposes, the
14 further expansion of the exhibits on Technology, En-
15 gineering, and Innovation that emerged from Cold
16 War.

17 (7) Ensuring that all future generations under-
18 stand the magnitude of the American contribution to
19 winning the Cold War, the Strategic Air Command's
20 mission of Strategic Nuclear Deterrence, the sac-
21 rifices made to preserve freedom and democracy,
22 and the benefits of peace for all future generations
23 in the 21st century and beyond.

1 **SEC. 4. AMERICA'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE COLD WAR.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Strategic Air Command and
3 Aerospace Museum located in Ashland, Nebraska, may be
4 referred to as “America’s National Museum of the Cold
5 War”.

6 (b) NOT A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.—
7 The Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum is
8 not a unit of the National Park System, and the author-
9 ization to refer to the museum as “America’s National
10 Museum of the Cold War” under subsection (a) shall not
11 be construed to require or authorize Federal funds to be
12 expended for any purpose related to the museum.

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